



Seeking for a New Type of Korea-China Cooperation in the COVID-19 Outbreak

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English Abstract

Since the beginning of 2020, the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (officially named COVID-19) that originated in Hubei, Wuhan, has been spreading throughout the entire globe at an extremely rapid pace. The first confirmed case in Wuhan was reported on December 12, 2019. In less than two months, an approximate number of confirmed cases in People's Republic of China alone reached 10,000. Soon the virus rapidly spread around the world. Within four months, there came 1 million confirmed cases and 70,000 deaths. Such phenomenon led the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare COVID-19 a global pandemic and demand all countries of the world to take active (counter)measures. In the wake of COVID-19, a considerable number of countries are more likely to focus on domestic affairs than on global issues, independently cope with difficulties, and develop an inward-looking approach. The tension between the U.S. and China is more likely to abate, and the movements of various, multilateral, regional cooperations and European unity are more likely to lose their momentum.

Meanwhile, COVID-19 poses another challenge to China, which was already in a predicament at home and abroad with the U.S.-China trade war that went full-swing since last year, Hong Kong's democratization protests, and Taiwan's re-election of President Tsai Ing-wen. China is expected henceforth to actively seek an international, joint response with South Korea, Russia, Italy, Iran, and other countries suffering from

COVID-19 through coordinating quarantine, sending medical staff, and supplying emergency relief goods (mask, preventative aid, etc.) and serve a sharp contrast to the Trump administration's America Firstism.

COVID-19 asks for a new momentum of cooperation between South Korea and China. The cooperation between South Korea and China mainly focused on economic and personal exchanges; it now should extend to cover fields of emerging security issues such as health, medicine, and communicable-disease control. Accordingly, South Korea and China can establish a new cooperation model for multilateral security and peace in Northeast Asia when both countries principally lead in the area of security cooperation and gradually expand the participation of neighboring countries, including North Korea. To this end, both Seoul and Beijing should further improve their political communication and cooperation and seek ways to achieve peace and interdependence in Northeast Asia in the wake of COVID-19. ❖

** Translator's note: This is a summarized unofficial translation of the original paper which was written in Korean. All references should be made to the original paper.*

** This article is written based on the author's personal opinions and does not reflect the views of the Sejong Institute.*